THE Lord Belhavens SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT,

The 17th. of *July* 1705.

MY Lord Chancellor, By what Experience I have had in this World, I always found, that when Divisions are once come to that Consistency, as to form themselves in Factions, upon different Measures, and opposite Designs; that then Reason and Reasoning makes but a very small Impression upon either of the Parties: Therefore I shall not enter into the Merits of this *Resolve*, nor of its Expediencie or Unexpediency at this time, that I may not give the least rise to Debate, or occasion of Misunderstanding amongst our selves. What I shall therefore say on this Head, is to advance this Position, *viz.* That there is more Danger to our Nation, and National Concerns by Divisions and Factions, than by any Mistakes in Fit and Adequate Measures, if they be Unanimously gone unto.

A wrong Measure, especially in Resolutions, may be Rectified and Redressed, when we attain unto a more full View of the Affair: And tho sometimes they prove

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Unsuccessful, yet Unanimity endures a Shock with Firmness; but Divisions and Factions increase and multiply, and that from very small Beginnings, so as to render all Persuasions Abortive, and that more especially amongst Men of Honour, who, as they are generally more Grateful, Constant and Firm to their Words and Parties, so upon Disappointments, they are more Prone to Resentment and Revenge, the most Dangerous of all Passions, and the most Fatal to the very Beeing of Nations.

What I plead for, my Lord, at this Time, is Unity. Would you have Limitations? go upon them unanimously. Would you have a Treaty? do the like. Would you settle the Succession upon Limitations without a Treaty? Would you settle the Succession upon a Treaty without Limitations? Would you have neither done at this time? In short, whatever you would have done, let it be done (*nemine contradicente*) and it will not want its own weight, for I am perswaded that whatever Resolution this Honourable House shall come to, a wrong Measure is preferable to a good one; if there be unanimity in the one, and Faction at the Bottom of the other.

My Lord, that I may not seem to speak without Book, I could adduce Instances from the Histories of *Europe* to confirm what I have said, and from none more than that of our Neighbours the States of *Holland*, whose Unity has raised them to the Grandeur and Riches they are possest of at this day, they wanted not wrong Measures and unsuccessful Attempts, but their unanimous Firmness in the Vindication of their *Liberty*, hath made good the Verity of their *Motto*: (*Concordia res parvæ crescunt*)

But waving what is Forreign, I shall only confine myself to our own Histories, and by four Examples I shall make it evidently appear, That our Predecessors, when in

a Good Understanding amongst themselves, were always in a Condition to defend their Rights and Liberties against the *English*, and that they never did prevail over Us, save when We were divided and broke by Factions.

The first Instance is, of that famous Contraversie about the Right of Succession to *Alexander* the Third; The Storie is so well known, that I shall not give this Honourable House the Trouble of Repeating it, but shall only say, We divided upon it: What followed upon that? The King of *England* gave us a King: What was the Consequence of that? Both of us pay'd very dear for it. For, as the Historians of both Nations tell us, there followed upon it the longest and most bloody War that ever was betwixt two Nations: Then, and not before, could it be said, that *England* had any pretence of Homage from us.

Pray, My Lord, had it not been better, that our Predecessors had of themselves chosen the worst of the Competitors, yea, the worst Man of the Nation by a general Consent, rather than to have sustained these Calamities which followed on that Division.

The other time, My Lord, that we groaned under *English* Bondage, was by *Cromwel*, who knew als well how to Divide as how to Fight. We had called home King *Charles* the Second as Successor to his Father; *Cromwel* enters *Scotland* with an Army, and prevails: What was the Reason of it? Was his Army comparable to ours for Number? He knew very well King *Charles* the First His Master had come upon us with a far better Army, and we less prepared and less accustomed to War, and yet, when Sword in hand, was necessitate to give us a Valuable Treaty at the *Birks*. He knew very well that we had the Remains of that Gallant Army, which had procur'd us so Good Conditions at the Treaty of *Rippon*;

And who afterwards had raised the Parliamentary Power above that of their Soveraign. He knew that we had the brave Troops that had preserv'd the North of *Ireland* from the *Irish* Rebels. Whence then came all these Hopes of *Oliver*? It came, My Lord, from our Divisions. We were United in these former Times, and Broken then. In short, we had the *Hamiltons*, *Grahames*, and *Campbells*, each driving on opposite Designs. Yea, My Lord, Faction was come to that hight of *Enthusiasism*, that when we came to fight *Cromwel* at *Dunbar*, we would not fight but as *Gideon* did the *Midianites*, altho we had no such Warrand for it. I pray GOD, My Lord, Things come not to such a hight now; Especially when we as they, mind more, Who shall do such and such Things, than what Things are fittest to be done; So that every Commissioner now must have the Board swept clean before he undertake the Queen's Business. I speak not this, My Lord, out of any Resentment that I have by being turned out of a Post lately. I profess, I have not the least Resentment upon it: Why should not the Queen imploy what Servants she thinks fit? But I speak of it, because I am afraid it prove a Seed to Faction, it having proven so Prolifick already, as to have two Cropts in one Year, tho' in this Northern Climat.

The two Instances where our Unity preserved us from the fatal Consequences of War with *England*, are these of *King DAVID and King JAMES the First*, after we had recovered our Liberty under the Conduct of the *Noble BRUCE*, who had forced the Grand-child, by a most solemn Renunciation to vomit up the Claim of *Homage*, unjustly imposed by the Father upon us: Two unhappy Accidents put these two Kings in the Hands of the

the *Engliſh*, did they let go the Opportunities to trump up their Claim of *Homage*? No, *My Lord*, what hindred them to proceed further, King *David* had loſt a conſiderable Battle, was their Priſoner himſelf, many of the Nobility killed and taken, *England* ſucceſsful againſt *France* at the ſame time, and their King Priſoner in *England*, King *James* the Firſt was their Priſoner, being forced to flee from the unjuſt Deſigns of his Uncle *Robert*, and as unjuſtly made Priſoner by them: Theſe Occaſions, My Lord, did appear favourable enough for *England* to make uſe of their time, but our firm Unanimity put a ſtop to their Deſigns: We declared we would not obey our Kings, as long as they were under *Engliſh* Power and Influence, and ſo both our Armies in *France*, and Peers in *Scotland* refuſed their Orders, as long as they were in *England*, looking upon them not as their King's Commands, but the Commands of an Enemy: And thus we were preſerved, and our Kings delivered to us upon Ranſom.

My Lord, I have obſerv'd, that *England* never let go any Opportunity, neither before nor ſince the Union of the two Crowns, to bring us under their Power; And I am perſwaded, that the Heats and Animoſities amongſt us theſe ſeveral Seſſions of Parliament bypaſt, hath, amongſt other things, occaſioned that Threatning and Unaccountable Act of Parliament, wherein they Characteriſe our Miniſters, and Criticiſe our Acts, as it hath alſo given a new Birth to theſe Contemptible and Ignorant Pamphlets, come out of late againſt the Sovoraguity and Independency of our Nation. Will you prevent the Conſequences of what is deſigned againſt us; Be as Unite as they in your Actings againſt them: Did Whigg and Torry differ about us? No, My Lord, the two Houſes, tho' in Civil War amongſt themſelves, did vye with

with one another, which of them should have the Honour to give us the sharpest and severest Blow.

To Conclude, Would you quench the Fire that appears to be raised against us in *England*? Would you have a Successful Treaty and good Limitations? Be Unanimous, and I hope the Case is not as yet so Desperate; But what our Predecessors have found, we may yet find the like.

It may be asked, My Lord, How we shall be Unanimous, and who shall yield? I think Providence has made that very easie, with Relation to this Resolve; For, suppose some be for Limitations, that are not for a Treaty; And others for a Treaty, that are not for Limitations: And that those who are against a Treaty, are against it; Because they do not expect Reasonable and Good Conditions from *England*: And that those who are against Limitations, are against them; Because they would prove of no long Continuance, and consequently looks upon them only as Amusements to bring us unto the *English* Succession. There is no Reason, My Lord, in all this, why both Parties should not agree in the Resolve, for suppose all these Suppositions should prove True, are we in any worse Condition than we are at present? Shall it be said, We will not so much as Resolve to Treat with *England*; Or, that Limitations, which are in our own Power both to make and to keep, shall be looked upon by us as things unpracticable, and of no Duration. No, My Lord, we have a Gracious Queen that will assist us in both, and who in Her Gracious Letter seems to desire both.

And I do consider *England* with Relation to the Succession of *Britain*, as so many Fishes inclosed in a large strong Nett, they have room to Swime, Toss, and Tumble,

ble, but as long as the Fiſher-men keeps their Hold, they cannot break through; I believe by this time they are ſenſible that the Succeſſion to the two Kingdoms in *Britain*, ought not to have been Deſigned, much leſs Settled, without acquainting one part of *Britain* with the Deſign, and that one part, *I*ndependent upon the other. Therefore, if we be Unite, & keep our Hold, & make no unreaſonable Demand either of Limitations from our Queen, or Conditions from *England*, but meerly ſuch as the Neceſſity of this Nation requires, *I* hope, by the Bleſſing of God upon our Juſt Endeavours, & the Cordial Support of our Moſt Excellent Soveraign, That we ſhall have all our Deſires granted, and a good Underſtanding betwixt the two Nations promoved, not for this time only, but for ever; Which, if they do ſlight at this time, *I* dare pretend to Propheſie, That, *The Time will come, when they will give More with leſs Ceremonie.*

Thus, My Lord, *I* have Frankly told you my Mind, and that with all Deference and Submiſſion to this Honourable Houſe, and tho *I* do not pretend to the Thanks of this Parliament, as the Lord *Haverſham* had that of the Houſe of Lords; Yet *I* will not yield to his Lordſhip, as to my *I*ntegrity and ſincere Concern for the Common-well of *Britain*: And in one thing *I* think *I* have the Advantage, That what *I* have ſaid, tends for Compoſing of Differences: Firſt, amongſt our Selves, and then, betwixt our Neighbour Nation and Us. Whereas, his Lordſhip's Speech, if *I* be not as much miſtaken as his Lordſhip was at the time he ſpoke it, tends directly the quite contrary way. Therefore, I am for the Reſolve, and for beginning with the Limitations.

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ble, but as long as the Either-man keeps their Hold, they cannot break through; I believe by this time they are sensible that the Succession to the two Kingdoms in Britain, ought not to have been Designed, much less Settled, without acquainting one part of Britain with the Design, and that one part, Independent upon the other. Therefore, if we be United, & keep our Hold, & make no unreasonable Demand either of Limitations from our Sovereign or Conditions from Parliament, but merely such as the Safety of this Nation requires, I hope, by the Blessing of God upon our Just Endeavours, & the Cordial Support of our Most Excellent Sovereign, That we shall have all our Defires granted, and a good Understanding betwixt the two Nations promoved, not for this time only, but for ever; Which, if they do Right at this time, I dare pretend to Prophefie, That, The Time will come, when they will give Thanks with Joy Ceremonie.

Thus, My Lord, I have Humbly told You my Mind, and that with all Deference and Submission to this Honourable House, and tho I do not pretend to the Thanks of this Parliament, as the Lord Haversham had that of the House of Lords; Yet I will not yield to his Lordship, as to my Integrity and Sincere Concern for the Common-weal of Britain: And in one thing I think I have the Advantage, That what I have said, tends for Compoling of Differences: First, among st our Selves, and then, betwixt our Neighbour Nation and Us. Whereas, his Lordships Speech, if I be not as much mistaken as his Lordship was at the time he spoke it, tends directly the quite contrary way. Therefore, I am for the Resolve, and for beginning with the Limitations.

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